

KKK rekindling an

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old flame

The white satin sheets are back.

On a Saturday night last month the men and women who wear these almost mystical outfits and matching satin hoods gathered at dusk on a hillside near the sleeping farming village of Gamber, just a half hour's drive east of Frederick.

From a mile away they could be seen parking their pick-up trucks, motorcycles and cars and walking the short distance past the kerosene-soaked 30 foot wooden cross, up to the podium at the crest of the hill.

At the entrance gate below, half a dozen men dressed in green military fatigues and surplus white Army helmets saluted visitors.

If it weren't for the bold black KKKK initials on the helmets these men could easily have passed for military police.

But they weren't. They were Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

At the crest of the hill, men and women in satin robes mingled. Some wore their satin face masks, revealing only their piercing eyes. Some didn't, displaying their white faces.

As the sun dropped below the horizon, patriotic hymns blasted from the speakers surrounding the podium, which was flanked by American and Confederate flags.

As dusk turned to darkness and the warm Spring air became damp and chilly, the final song "God Bless America" came over the loud speaker.

Then the speakers, about half a dozen in all, went to work on the crowd, slowly and strategically mounting their emotions; whipping them into a frenzy.

"First of all we're going to get down to the basic facts," belted Dale Rousch, the Grand Dragon of Ohio. "What you will encounter in the United States of America is socialism, Niggerism, Judaism and communism. These are the four basic factors that are taking over your land. And I mean what I say. Today we got a socialistic government. Next . . . Niggerism. They are running your government. They are pulling every punch that is in Washington. (The audience applauds). Third . . . Judaism. The Jews run the Niggers. (The crowd applauds and laughs. One man yells: "Tell it like it is brother.") I'm not here to pull the punches," Rousch continues. "I'm here to tell you the facts which you are going to encounter. If you don't

believe me look at the back of your dollar bill. The star of David's on the right hand corner of the eagle and look close at the six pointed star above the eagle. It's Jewish controlled. (By now Rousch is screaming into the microphone and shaking his fists, underscoring every word.) Jews from the beginning, Jews to the end!! We are supplying foreign aid in Israel and throughout the world to build a Jewish empire. That's why we have fallen by the wayside. As Americans we cannot go forward. And how did they all bring this about you ask yourselves: A government within a government. Adolf Hilter and quite a few of the other people throughout the European countries knew about the threat to their nations. . .

"To give you the truth, ladies and gentlemen, don't take my word for it. Go back to the scriptures. Revelation second chapter, ninth verse: 'They who call themselves Jews but are not but the synagogue of Satan.' Where are the synagogues in America? Every major city in the United States! They worship the Devil! Lucifer!

"Now you say am I anti-semitic? I cannot be anti-semitic because the Arabs are semitic people and I'm for the Arabs. (The audience laughs and applauds.)

"I'm tall white Christian American and that's the way I will die . . . as a tall white Christian American."

While the KKK has existed for over 100 years, its popularity has wavered over the years. This most recent surge in popularity is the result of the current political climate.

Tony LaRicci, the Grand Dragon of Maryland, said the local Klan organization has been growing steadily since he joined ten years ago. "I think people are becoming fed up with both the communist movement and the integration movement.

"Of course we're not as large as we were in the 1930s but we're getting there," LaRicci said. In the 1930s there were 33,000 Klansmen in Maryland,

LaRicci said. He would not disclose how many members there are now.

The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan first organized in the South after the war between the states, approximately 1866.

The name Ku Klux was taken from the Greek word *kyklos*, which means circle.

During the Reconstruction period most Southern leaders lost their right to



Grand Dragon
Tony LaRicci

vote. Freed blacks and carpetbaggers from the North gained control of state and local governments.

While the Klan was first organized as a social group in Tennessee, many Southerners began to use the Klan to terrorize former slaves.

They rode at night wearing masks, white cardboard hats and draped both themselves and their horses in white sheets.

The klan grew more violent. Blacks and black sympathizers were frightened, flogged, tortured and lynched.

But when whites regained control of the southern governments there was no longer any purpose for the Klan organization and it disbanded.

Around 1915 the Klan reorganized in Georgia and directed its actions against blacks, Jews, Catholics, foreigners and radicals. The movement spread throughout the United States and at one point claimed five million members. At the height of its power the Klan's Grand Dragon of Indiana became virtually a dictator of the state.

In the 1920s prosperity came and the Klan lost popularity. Its membership floundered and by 1944 it was formally dissolved as a national body because it could not pay \$500,000 in back taxes to the federal government.

Ten years later, groups from six southern states reorganized the Klan. Then when the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed compulsory racial segregation the klan's membership grew by leaps and bounds.

In the 1960s the busing issue pushed the KKK another step to the forefront.

The busing issue remains one of the klan's hottest issues.

"Have you ever heard of a child getting an education on a bus?" former Klansman Layton Braun asked from the podium. "I'm talking about the busing in your schools that you do not want. Your money is paying for it. And what do they use as a hammer over your head? That hammer is that if you do so-and-so you don't integrate and you don't send your children into a jungle and fear for their lives that they may not get home that night that they'll take away the funds from your school. They aren't taking away any funds, the only thing they're returning to you is some of the money that we've already paid in taxes that rightfully belongs to us. They aren't giving us a thing! (The crowd cheers). It's our own money that they're returning to us. Now how long do we intend to stand and listen to this garbage? How long do we intend to let

the pinkies in our own government tell us how to live and how to raise our own children? Do your children mean this little to you?"

While most of the Klansmen and women at the Gamber rally were middle aged, some were younger.

One young couple, John E. Norfolk Jr. and Theresa Thomas of Glen Burnie, explained why they joined last year.

"Things are just getting out of hand everywhere," said Norfolk. "Look at the racial problem in the schools and look at all the crooked politicians from Maryland who are in jail. We feel we've got to start cutting the line somewhere, so we joined."

"What we want is to build up America," asserted Ms. Thomas. "We don't have any interest in foreign countries. That's just gotten us into a mess in the past. Look at Vietnam. The Cuba situation was the same."

She says Jews and Catholics can join the Klan "as long as you take an oath that says you have no allegiance to other countries. We come first."

Several older Klansmen said they would have joined the KKK years ago if they had known it existed.

The robes they wear cannot be purchased by outsiders. They are specially ordered from the organization.

While most of the robes are white there is an occasional red or green one. The white satin indicates the wearer is a full-fledged Klansman. Stripes on the arm indicate the wearer holds a Klan office. The red outfits are worn by state KKK officials and the green ones by the grand dragon of a state.

Another color, purple, is worn by only one person in the country, the Imperial Wizard of the KKK.

The official symbol of the KKK is a white cross, centered on a bright red blood drop. The cross represents "pure" Christianity while the drop of blood stands for the blood that was shed for democracy. Klansmen wear this emblem over their hearts.

With this "blood-cross" as a reminder, the Klan hopes to unite to put their candidate Dale Rousch into the office of the President of the United States on a Klan ticket.

The Klansmen see 1976 as a last ditch effort to save this country.

"We're in an hour of peril," explains Rousch. "This country is about to see the biggest disaster known to history . . . If we don't stand forth, within another year the great white race of the United States will perish under communism. White man built this great nation, the black



Interested visitors

and brown had nothing to do with this nation other than to tear it down . . . In 1976 the communists already have planned to take over the United States.

"You as a white man and woman, you as a Christian, you must band together . . . To destroy the white race is to destroy God's creation. Pollute the almighty bloodstream of the white woman and there's no purity thereafter . . ."

Klan supporter Layton Braun continued to press on this theme of urgency, during his speech:

"Folks . . . I'm only trying to wake you up. To put a little backbone where some jelly bone is. America is the greatest county in the world and don't let the bureaucrats in Washington tell you differently. What we need in this country is another political party to give them a little competition.

"We need someone to stand up and do something about it. . . And the pendulum is now starting to swing, to swing back again. (His voice is rising.) It's our time, you can see it here now for the past four or five years that I've been coming here. The people are starting to wake up. They're getting pinched now. They're getting into that corner and they're getting claustrophobia. (By now Braun is speaking at a feverish pace and the crowd is becoming caught up in the enthusiasm.) They're saying what must we do? We have to do something. We've got to go to that Klan rally tonight," he screams into the microphone. "We've got to have somebody build a fire under us, and that, what we're doing tonight. We're going to come out here in another six months in another rally and you'll see ten times as any people here . . . Our time has come," he screams in a hoarse voice. "We've had it. We are finished. We are not going to take it anymore and let's make that a solemn oath even unto death."

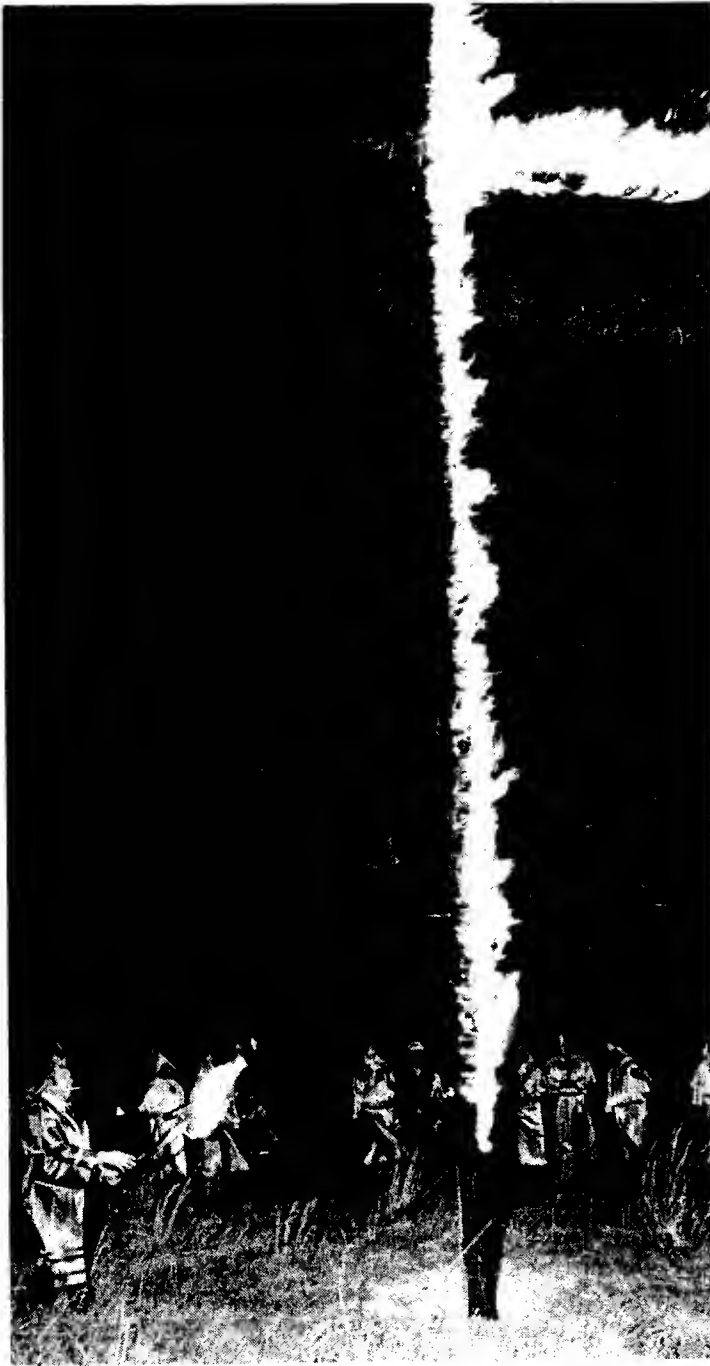
When the last speech ended the Klansmen and Klanswomen huddled around an American flag, each grasping a wooden torch.

To the slow, solemn cadence of one man's prayer-song the Klans people marched in a circle around the still unlighted cross.

After several turns around, they stopped, kneeled and raised their torches to the cross.

As the cross was lighted, the man chanted: "God this is a glorious sight to watch the Klansmen elevate thee. Oh shed the light over the darkness that has clouded the truth on this great earth."

As the cross caught fire, flames from the right arm moved slowly to the left. The man stopped his chanting and observed: "You'll notice the cross lights from the right not the left. Right shall triumph . . . Now if you'll notice the right is enveloping and overcoming the left, just as we shall beat all the obstacles to overcome the leftist element."



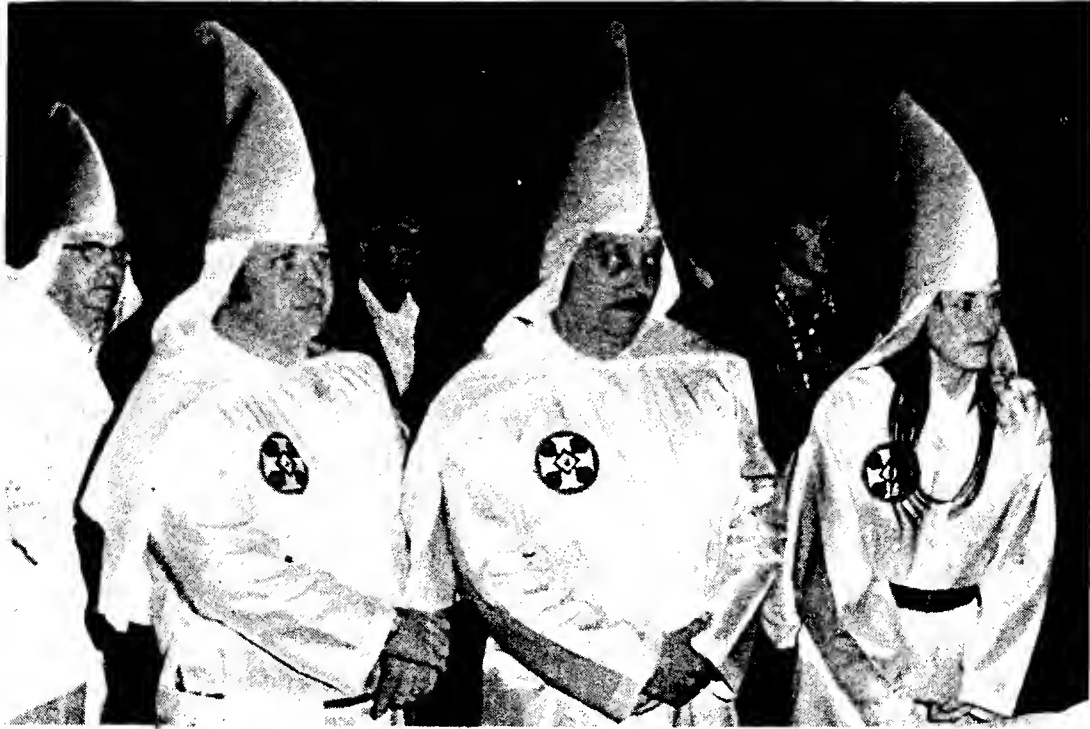
Grand Dragon Rousch lights cross



Robed in satin



Young Klan couple



Loyal to their cause



The torch lighting ceremony